



## **Memorandum of Understanding Between the University of Illinois and the U.S. Commerce Department's National Institute of Standards and Technology**

The University of Illinois (U of I) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) have agreed to expand their ties, strengthening the nation's economy and quality of life. A stronger partnership will enable each institution to better achieve its mission – benefiting the nation and Illinois, in particular. The agreement was signed on September 29, 2004, and builds on existing interactions between the two organizations. NIST is an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department's Technology Administration.

**Building and Fire Research:** NIST already has ties with U of I's Urbana campus, which undertakes work in wind engineering and in earthquake hazard reduction. NIST also has ties with fire research under way at U of I's Chicago campus. Minimizing or preventing building failures through improved structural analysis has been identified as a prime area where U of I and NIST can team more strongly to improve public safety. Recent hurricanes in Florida emphasize the importance of building safety. NIST recently was assigned by Congress additional responsibilities to investigate building failures, and the opportunities for collaboration are substantial. U of I and NIST now will explore those opportunities vigorously.

**Materials Research:** NIST has had close relationships with the U of I at Urbana for more than a decade at the NIST Center for Neutron Research – a national facility that is unmatched in the U.S. About 60 U of I researchers use this NIST facility each year already. Several prominent facility staff are recent Urbana graduates. The two institutions have worked together on projects ranging from measurements involving hydrogen in metals – critical to understanding how certain metals fail in use – as well as the study of new magnetic materials and cements.

**Healthcare:** U of I Chicago's Department of Human Nutrition and Dietetics has been using NIST's measurement for cancer prevention research for 20 years – and is expected to continue to do so. Also, that department helped NIST to develop an important tool for ensuring the accuracy of measurements for fat-soluble vitamins.

Homeland security, nanotechnology (including quantum dots), microfluidics, ceramics and supercomputing are among the other areas in which the organizations have worked together or could begin to collaborate – and in which the institutions could make better use of their facilities while enabling their faculty and staff to better achieve their missions. The enhanced capabilities through closer ties will permit both U of I and NIST to accomplish goals together that they could not achieve alone.

The MOU was signed by James J. Stukel, President of the University of Illinois, and Phillip J. Bond, Under Secretary of Commerce for Technology.

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